

In the Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A sterile apparatus to protect endoscope(s) comprising:
an impact resistant housing having an outer surface defining an opening, an interior of the housing defining a canal having a first end communicating with the opening and a second end terminating within the housing for receiving a distal lens of an endoscope; ~~and~~

a defogging material disposed adjacent to the second end of the canal for defogging a distal lens of an endoscope when inserted within the ~~canal~~ canal; and
a self-sealing mechanism disposed within the canal, the self-sealing mechanism being configured to allow for an endoscope to enter the canal and make contact with the defogging material and to prevent the defogging material from spilling out of the canal.

2. (Previously Presented) An apparatus to protect endoscope(s) as in claim 1, wherein the canal is shaped for receiving a plurality of types of endoscopes.

3. (Previously Presented) An apparatus to protect endoscope(s) as in claim 1, wherein the apparatus is made of disposable material.

4. (Previously Presented) An apparatus to protect endoscope(s) as in claim 1, wherein the canal is complementarily shaped to that of an endoscope to be received therein.

5. (Previously Presented) An apparatus to protect endoscope(s) as in claim 1, wherein the apparatus is configured to protect endoscopes during intermittent use.

6. (Previously Presented) An apparatus to protect endoscope(s) as in claim 1, wherein the apparatus is configured to protect endoscopes during transportation.

7. (Previously Presented) An apparatus to protect endoscope(s) as in claim 1, wherein the interior of the housing includes:

a storage sheath defining the canal, the outer surface of the housing and the storage sheath defining a cavity therebetween; and

an impact absorbing material substantially filling the cavity.

8. (Previously Presented) An apparatus to protect endoscope(s) as in claim 7, wherein the impact absorbing material is Styrofoam.

9. (Previously Presented) An apparatus to protect endoscope(s) as in claim 7, wherein the impact absorbing material is a gel.

10. (Previously Presented) An apparatus to protect endoscope(s) as in claim 7, wherein the impact absorbing material is a liquid.

11. (Previously Presented) An apparatus to protect endoscope(s) as in claim 7, wherein the impact absorbing material is a gas.

12. (Previously Presented) An apparatus to protect endoscope(s) as in claim 1, further comprising means for removably affixing the housing to a surface.

13. (Previously Presented) An apparatus to protect endoscope(s) as in claim 1, further comprising:

an anchor; and

a cord attached to the housing and the anchor.

14. (Previously Presented) An apparatus to protect endoscope(s) as in claim 13, wherein the cord is removably attachable to the housing.

15. (Previously Presented) An apparatus to protect endoscope(s) as in claim 13, wherein the anchor is removably attachable to a surface.

Claims 16-41 (Canceled)

42. (Previously Presented) An apparatus to protect endoscope(s) as in claim 1, further comprising a reservoir communicating with the second end of the canal for accommodating the defogging material.